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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ALTMIRE).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 15, 2009.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JASON ALTMIRE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Reverend Gary Hashley, Calvary Memorial Church, Gering, Nebraska, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, David, the beloved Psalmist and great King of Israel wrote, "Show me Your ways, O Lord; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; on You I wait all the day."

Father, today I echo King David's thoughts for all Americans, but especially for these, our elected Representatives. Please show us what we need to see, teach us what we need to know, and lead us where we need to go as individuals and as a Nation. I acknowledge publicly that You are God and that all of us who are blessed to live in this great country need to wait on You, and to seek Your face today and every day.

Please, Father, guide the work done in this room and make Your presence known. I ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the

last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. FLEMING) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. FLEMING led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING PASTOR GARY HASHLEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of today's guest chaplain, Pastor Gary Hashley. He is joining us from my hometown of Gering, Nebraska, where he serves the congregation at the Calvary Memorial Church. Pastor Hashley's journey began in Michigan, where he graduated both from high school and the Grand Rapids School of the Bible and Music.

Over the years, he has served communities as diverse as Kalamazoo, Michigan, and LaGrange, Wyoming, before settling in Nebraska. It is an honor to be here with him today.

For 30 years, Pastor Hashley's service has had a profound impact on his community. He has led efforts to feed the poor, to spread his faith to those in need, and has even been active with local 4-H councils. I thank Pastor Hashley for his dedication, leadership, and service to our community and for his words of faith this morning.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Americans want quality, affordable health care. Fifty million Americans are uninsured. H.R. 3200 will still leave 17 million Americans uninsured. Now, how is that possible? Because it keeps in place a for-profit insurance system which siphons off at least \$400 billion every year which could be used to make sure all Americans, not just most Americans, receive quality health care.

H.R. 3200 will not solve the problem of underinsurance. Sixty percent of all bankruptcies in America are due to people not being able to pay hospital bills. Of those, 80 percent are insured. People just can't afford the rising premiums, copays, and deductibles which are the basis of insurance company profits.

The only way to break the insurance companies' hold on our system is to guarantee affordable, quality health care to all Americans through a universal single-payer, not-for-profit health care system.

DEMOCRATS SHOULD STOP THE SPIN ON THE ECONOMY

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Democrats should stop trying to spend the results of their economic borrowing program. Despite what the

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Obama administration has said, the 2,600,000 Americans who have lost jobs since January is a clear sign that their Recovery Act has not done its job. Instead of more rhetoric, Democrats should work with Republicans to put in place commonsense proposals that will rein in the wasteful spending and focus on job creation.

Our economy will grow strong again thanks to individuals and small businesses that create the majority of jobs in this country. It will not be due to the billions in Big Government borrowing perpetrated by this administration. We should focus our time on helping small businesses grow and provide relief to those who are suffering during these tough economic times.

Republicans have offered a plan to do just that, and we will do so without adding trillions in additional Big Government, liberal spending, and actions such as the new health care taxes that will destroy jobs.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE FOR EVERY AMERICAN

(Mr. BACA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, we have a critical role in reviewing the specific details of health care reform. Access to health care is something we owe to every American family across this Nation. Everyone should have coverage. Everyone should have access.

There is no question that we must have comprehensive reform to our health system. Critics to reform are failing to get the message and only talk about rhetoric. Doing nothing for a broken system is not the answer. They do not understand the fear and devastation families face while on trips to the emergency room. They do not understand the severe ramifications faced by families when they receive the doctor's bill or hospital bill.

Families must have access to health care. Never again will you have coverage be denied. Never again will you have to make a decision between life or job decision based on coverage.

I urge my colleagues to support comprehensive health reform.

TAXPAYER DOLLARS SHOULD NOT FUND ABORTIONS

(Mr. FLEMING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, as it stands now, the Democrat health plan equals taxpayer-funded abortions. Let me repeat that. As it stands now, the Democrat health plan equals taxpayer-funded abortions.

If unamended, the Obama health plan restructuring will be the most massive abortion expansion since *Roe v. Wade* and every insurance premium payer

and every taxpayer will be forced to pay for every abortion. The taking of innocent life is not health care. I know; I'm a physician. Yet, without an abortion exclusion, this reform bill will be the platform for thrusting abortion into every aspect of health care in this country.

The Secretary of HHS and the so-called Benefits Advisory Committee will determine the specific mandated services. Abortion will be included in the minimum benefits unless it is excluded, and the Democrats refuse to do that.

This bill does an end run on current abortion funding restrictions by containing language that both authorizes and appropriates.

IMPROVING HEALTH CARE FOR AMERICANS

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, we have an historic opportunity to finally improve health care in America, to finally bring access and quality of care to all Americans, not just the lucky few.

I'm so proud to support the bill introduced by the three committees of jurisdiction and to play my part in seeing us pass legislation in both the House and Senate before the August recess. What's great is that there is something for everyone here. There is affordable access to coverage for people who've never been insured before; there is help for seniors stuck in the dreadful part D doughnut hole; there are consumer protections against longstanding egregious practices by insurance companies; there is amazing investment into our health care workforce, including physicians, nurses, and allied health professionals; and there is finally an incentive to practice wellness-based health care instead of illness-based disease treatment.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in passing America's Affordable Health Choices Act and enacting the health care reform our constituents so desperately need and Americans deserve.

AUTOMATIC ENROLLMENT IN GOVERNMENT-RUN HEALTH CARE

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as we debate the best way to reform our health care system and ensure that all Americans have access to quality health care, some Members of Congress insist that a government-run option must be included. Yet, in one proposal, Members of Congress are curiously exempt from the public plan.

For those who are convinced that government-run health care won't sacrifice quality and won't lead to ration-

ing, I back a resolution saying that if a Member of Congress votes to support the public option, then that Member must be automatically enrolled in it. If Members are convinced that the government-run public option will deliver the same quality of care as their congressional health plans, then they ought to be the first in line to enroll.

Members of Congress should stop asking the American people to make sacrifices they are not willing to make themselves.

HEALTH CARE SYSTEM REFORM

(Mr. SIREs asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SIREs. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak of the pressing need to fix our health care system. Every day, Americans not only worry about getting well, but whether they can afford to get well or stay healthy. They are not the only ones who worry. All too often small businesses are forced to choose between coverage or layoffs.

We have the most expensive health system care in the world, spending almost 50 percent more per person on health care than the next most costly nation; yet we're not healthier for it.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad that Congress and the President are working together on a plan to reform our health care system, a plan that will reduce costs, provide choices, and guarantee affordable quality health care for all. We must act now, for it is evident that the status quo is simply not working.

WHERE IS THE WEB SITE

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, when Congress passed the \$787 billion so-called stimulus bill, the White House promised to set up a Web site where people could go to learn how the money was being spent. Recovery.gov has since been criticized for how long it took to get going and how forthcoming it has been with the information people need; yet it seems doubtful that what critics had in mind was an \$18 million overhaul. That's exactly what this administration is planning.

The General Services Administration, the agency that manages Federal Government property, announced Wednesday that \$18 million in additional stimulus funds is being spent to redesign the recovery.gov Web site. A cost estimate from www.designquote.net makes the \$18 million figure even more outrageous. According to the site, the top-end estimate for a premium Web design from a professional firm flush with all of the bells and whistles comes out at \$192,740.

One has to wonder what the other \$17,807,260 in taxpayer money will be used for.